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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KINSHASA 001063

SIPDIS

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ADDIS ABABA PLS PASS TO A/S FRAZER; KIGALI PLS PASS TO
SPECIAL ADVISOR SHORTLEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/04/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [CG](#) [RW](#) [KPKO](#)

SUBJECT: RWANDAN, DRC FOREIGN MINISTERS COMMIT
TO GREATER COOPERATION

Classified By: CHARGE S. BROCK (1.4 B, D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Rwandan foreign minister Charles Murigande's official visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from September 2-4, the first by a Rwandan official to the DRC since the end of the second Congo war in 2004, is a potentially significant step in a slow process of reconciliation between the two countries. The visit culminated in a signing ceremony before international and domestic media of a joint communique (para 9) committing both countries to close coordination on a number of issues. Murigande also met with President Kabila; no information is available on what transpired at their meeting. The resolve of both sides to honor the commitments agreed to during the visit remains to be seen. International support for efforts to implement the commitments, as well as encouragement for continuing dialogue between the two countries, are key to consolidating a nascent DRC-Rwanda rapprochement. End summary.

¶2. (C) Murigande arrived Sunday September 2, meeting with SRS G Swing that afternoon before joining Mbusa for dinner. His official schedule began Monday morning. Mbusa told us August 29 that he and Murigande had agreed to the participation of international observers at the bilateral, but differences remained up to the morning of the event. Rwandan objections appears to have prevailed; observers were invited to attend opening and closing sessions but not, as Mbusa had proposed, participate in working meetings. Observers were asked to attend the opening ceremony at 9:30 am on September 3; the meeting began more than two hours late. Observers included the EU Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region; South Africa's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region; the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General; a Kinshasa-based diplomat representing the AU; and the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires.

Opening ceremony
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¶3. (SBU) The delayed opening ceremony was attended by the local and international press, the international observers and both delegations. Mbusa gave the first speech, an off-the-cuff statement that touched on the volatility in the east and evoking the "great expectations" for the meeting by peoples of both countries. He specifically mentioned the need to deal with the ex-FAR and Interahamwe (Hutus who originally fled Rwanda during the 1994 massacre, now known as the FDLR) who were "pillaging, raping and robbing every day

in the Congo. He also mentioned the threat to innocent civilians posed by the activities of renegade General Laurent Nkunda but stopped short of asking for Rwandan assistance in dealing with Nkunda's forces. Mbusa was clearly concerned that the tensions in the east could degenerate into widespread violence and asked both delegations to bear in mind that preventing violence was the main objective of the bilateral meeting.

¶4. (SBU) Murigande struck a more somber tone. Reading from a prepared text in English, he criticized the ex-FAR and Interahamwe "who are the root cause of much of the insecurity and instability in our region." He blamed the FDLR's ethnic cleansing of Tutsis for the "General Nkunda problem" and expressed his "ardent hope" that the visit would lead to a commitment by the DRC to track down the FDLR. Murigande stated that his government was willing to open an embassy in Kinshasa and offered to facilitate a peaceful solution to the Nkunda problem. The meeting ended with broad smiles as both foreign ministers shook hands before the press.

¶5. (C) Comment: Although the opening ceremony ended on a high note with handshakes and grins, the friendly, informal style and brief, short-on-substance statement by Mbusa was in sharp contrast to the more business-like speech read by a Murigande who did not mince words. Also, the deliberate use of English was commented on by some observers since he, Murigande, is a francophone and interpreters had not translated Mbusa's speech into English. Murigande began reading his statement with help from an RDC consecutive translator but dismissed her quickly. He then continued reading in English, translating it himself into French, a

KINSHASA 00001063 002 OF 004

technique that lengthened his presentation to almost 45 minutes. End comment.

Joint communiqu
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¶6. (U) After a short reception for the visiting delegation and international observers, the two ministers and their teams withdrew to continue their working meeting. Observers were informed that a closing session with the press to report on the day's work and to issue a joint communiqu would begin at 7:00 pm. The closing ceremony convened at 8:30. After signing the joint communiqu before international observers and media representatives, the communiqu (see para 9) was read. The communiqu commits both sides to structured dialogue and calls for coordination on a number of fronts, including:

-- Establishment of a "Regular Mechanism for Discussion, Follow-up and Discussion of their mutual commitments, involving the ministers responsible for foreign affairs and defense, the chiefs of staff of the armies, as well as the heads of the intelligence services."

-- Implementation of a "Joint Verification mechanism to address respective concerns in the area of security," to be activated within 48 hours.

-- Efforts to "intensify surveillance operations along the common border between the Republic of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in cooperation with the countries' armed forces."

-- Standing up of a "Joint Working Commission responsible for replacing the border markers inherited from the colonial period."

-- Creation of a "Tripartite RDC-Rwanda-UNHCR Commission to undertake the repatriation of Congolese refugees living in Rwanda.

17. (C) The press reports that Murigande met with President Kabila early September 4 prior to departing for Kigali via commercial flight to Nairobi. We do not have information on that meeting but sources have told us that Kabila and Murigande met alone for a short period. Although it is not unusual for Kabila to meet alone with visiting foreign ministers, a one-on-one with Murigande bolsters the perception that the President does not totally trust Mbusa. It is worth noting that members of Kabila's staff participated in the Congolese delegation, including diplomatic advisor Marcellin Cishambo and roving ambassador Seraphin Ngwej.

18. (C) Comment: The initiatives in the communiqu  to establish bilateral channels to address common challenges such as the Joint Verification Mechanism and Joint Working Commission hold the promise of a thaw in DRC-Rwanda relations. By addressing surmountable problems, such as demarcating the border, these initiatives could add momentum to the effort to tackle tougher issues separating the two countries. Seeing the two sides talk is encouraging, but the Murigande-Mbusa meeting likely has little bearing on the implementation of concrete proposals to address negative forces' activity in eastern DRC. The Joint Communiqu  asked MONUC to do more, but MONUC's capacity and willingness to wade deeper into the Kivus crisis is unclear. No new thinking or specific suggestions were raised on how to disarm and repatriate FDLR back to Rwanda. International support for efforts to implement the commitments, as well as encouragement for maintaining a dialogue between the two countries, are key to consolidating a nascent DRC-Rwanda rapprochement.

19. (U) Following is unofficial translation of the Joint Communiqu 

Begin text of JOINT COMMUNIQUE
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(1) At the invitation of His Excellency Antipas MBUSA

KINSHASA 00001063 003 OF 004

NYAMWISI, Minister of State responsible for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the RDC, His Excellency Charles MURIGANDE, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda, made an official visit to Kinshasa from September 2-4, 2007.

(2) Minister MURIGANDE led a delegation composed of four high-ranking officials of the Rwandan government including Ambassador Richard SEZIBERA, Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region of the Rwandan President, Paul KAGAME.

(3) The Congolese delegation, led by Antipas MBUSA NYAMWISE, consisted of CHIKEZ DIEMU, Minister of Defense and Veterans Affairs; Marcellin CISHAMBO principal political and diplomatic counselor to the Head of State; and Seraphin NGWEJ, ambassador-at-large to the Head of State.

(4) The opening session of the meeting was graced by the presence of international observers, including:

- The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General RDC;
- The Special Representative of the African Union in the RDC;
- The Special Envoy of the European Union for the Great Lakes region;
- The Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the United States in the DRC;
- The Special Envoy of the Republic of South Africa for the Great Lakes region.

(5) The two delegations reviewed issues of common interest, in particular the prevailing situation in the East of the RDC.

After exchanging views, the two sides concurred on the need to institute a regular Mechanism for Discussion, Follow-up and Evaluation of their mutual commitments, involving the ministers responsible for foreign affairs and defense, the chiefs of staff of the armies, as well as the heads of the intelligence services.

(6) The two sides also agreed to the activation within 48 hours of a Joint Verification mechanism to address their respective concerns in the area of security.

(7) The two sides call on MONUC to intensify surveillance operations along the common border between the Republic of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in cooperation with the countries' armed forces.

(8) Regarding the border issues, the two sides agreed to set up a Joint Working Commission responsible for replacing the border markers inherited from the colonial period.

(9) Regarding the issue of Congolese refugees living in Rwanda, the sides agreed to the creation of a Tripartite RDC-Rwanda-UNHCR Commission to undertake their repatriation.

(10) The two parties agreed on a common approach of commitment and coordination to resolve the issue of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe living in the RDC.

(11) The two parties commit to take all necessary steps so that the ex-FAR and Interahamwe disarm and return to Rwanda.

(12) The two sides reiterated their commitments to respect the principles agreed to in the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes, particularly Article 5 which stipulates that each of the Pact's member states will:

"Abstain from sending or supporting armed oppositions or armed or rebel groups or in the territory of another member State, or tolerating within its own territory armed or rebel groups engaged in armed in armed conflicts or implicated in acts of violence or subversion between the Government of another state."

(13) The two parties have agreed that resolution of the issue of the Ex-Far and Interahamwe, as well as that of Congolese refugees living in Rwanda remain the exclusive competence of States and not of individuals.

(14) The working session was conducted in an atmosphere of

KINSHASA 00001063 004 OF 004

cordiality and mutual understanding.

(15) Finally, the Rwandan delegation expressed its appreciation to the Congolese government for its warm welcome and its hospitality.

Signed in Kinshasa, 3 September, 2007

For the RDC
Antipas MBUSA NBYAMWISI

For Rwanda
Charles MURIGANOE

End text Joint Communiqu
BROCK